
EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order brings into force on the dates provided for in the Order various provisions of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

On 15th February 1999, the powers to make appointments to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (mainly section 68), the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (mainly section 73) and the Tribunal established under section 91 of the Act come into force.

The Human Rights Commission is brought into existence by article 2(1) on 1st March 1999 and can carry out most but not all its functions from that date. The function of assisting in or bringing proceedings under section 65(5) and 70 is brought into force by article 2(5) on 1st June 1999. Remaining functions, in connection with the Assembly are not yet in force. The Order also brings into force on 1st March 1999 section 72 which dissolves the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights.

The Order brings into force on 1st March 1999 the power under section 75(3) to designate certain departments, corporations, bodies or persons as a public authority on whom, once it is in force, the statutory duty to have regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity under section 75 is imposed.

The Order also brings into force on 1st March 1999, powers to make rules governing procedures in connection with proceedings before the Tribunal established under section 91. In addition, on that date, there is brought into force the power to make an Order in Council under section 49 about the form, manner and publication of Letters Patent signifying Her Majesty's Royal Assent to an Assembly Bill; provision, in paragraph 38 of Schedule 10, enlarging existing powers to make rules of procedure for courts and tribunals in connection with proceedings in devolution issues; and the power in section 82 to make Orders in Council in connection with proceedings under the 1998 Act before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.